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THE BARNABITES

Manual of history and spirituality
of the Order of Clerics Regular
of St. Paul Beheaded

CHAPTER 12

FROM THE CONSTITUTIONS TO THE TRANSFER OF THE GENERAL CURIA TO ROME
(1579 - 1662)

Monastic spirit and Apostolic Eclecticism

So finally the Barnabites gave themselves final rules. They had refused to adopt one of the four classic rules of spirituality: Basilian, Augustinian, Benedictine, and Franciscan, being aware of giving birth to a new style of religious and apostolic life in the Church: the Clerics Regular.

The Constitutions could give the opportunity to capture this new style in its "Barnabite" version. We will talk about the Spirituality of the Order later. Here we will make some observations almost as an introduction to the many decades of Barnabite history we are going to describe.

The Constitutions have made an attempt of synthesis between the religious ideal and the apostolic activity. The second book of the Constitutions gives us a magnificent description of the religious ideal.

The **monastic matrix** which characterizes our Order is very evident in the communitarian life structure, as manifested in the many community chapters, the obligation of Divine Office in the choir, and meditation in common; the Father Superior's role as the "Abbot" among his confreres: he knows their life, disciplines the reception of the Sacraments, and he himself administers them.

Such a spirit could leave only little room for any activity which would be too demanding, like parishes, direction of seminaries, Sisters communities, etc. This is why the Constitutions forbid such activities. For the same reason they forbid initiatives and jobs which would interfere with life in common and the choir; therefore, the Barnabites could not teach in Universities, although many were the requests, as we shall see.

The 1579 Constitutions are so concerned with the cenobitic life that they fall into a certain apostolic relativism. For sure it is not the case with the Ignatian one, which dedicated a full book (the IV) to the apostolate of education. The lack of a qualification in a specific apostolic activity continues throughout the Constitutions and in the directives of our rules. The Barnabites are called "Coadiutors of the bishop" for their preaching apostolate and the spiritual direction. Then many apostolic activities toward the poor, the sick, the needy, etc. are offered them, but a specific field of concentration for them is not identified!

This is why the Fathers General of the following period we are about to outline, will be "great" as they directed the Order toward specific apostolic activities. This is also why, besides the initial oppositions, no apostolic field is per se excluded. This will bring about the "Eclecticism," that is availability, the Pauline "All to all" which will characterize the Barnabites throughout the centuries. For the same reason the Order will refuse too exclusive qualifications in the apostolic field. Thus, not schools of thought as such, but individual personalities will adorn the life of the Congregation at the service of the Church, for the short duration of their lifetime. This will be the fate of all the scientific, liturgical, ecumenical, biblical, archeological movements which have become part of the history of the Congregation. This reflection is very important to understand the development of our history through the centuries.

Three Fathers General were outstanding at the end of the 1500's and at the beginning of the 1600's: Charles Bascapè (1586-1593), Cosimo Dossena (1596-1599; 1602-1616), and Ambrose Mazenta (1612-1617).

Their concern was to assure for the Congregation a solid cultural and spiritual formation, an orderly community life, a wise distribution of jobs, and an efficacious activity.

Father Charles Bascapè (1586-1593)

Charles Bascapè was not even 36 years old when he was called to take the direction of the Order. The election put to silence some complains that he was too involved with the Archbishop Gaspare Visconti at the detriment of the Congregation. Indeed he will dedicate his life to the welfare of the Congregation and then to write the life of St. Charles Borromeo.

His goals were to promote the Community religious life, and to enlarge the apostolic influence on the outside. A program already outlined by the Constitutions. In his first circular letter to the confreres he wrote:

> "Blessed be the Lord for all our activities... it is not because of our work and skill but by his mercy who delights in us! May the desire for regular observance grow with the increase of members and houses."

To guide the Communities he undertook a needed task, the writing of rules for various offices, as "an instrument of order, peace, prosperity, and health for the Congregation." For the cult of a religious spirit he published also a little work on Regular Discipline based on the rules of Sts. Basil, Bernard, and Bonaventure.

Fr. Bascapè, Superior General for two consecutive terms, had a great vision about the effective qualifications for a Barnabite. In a letter to his Assistant, Fr. Augustine Tornielli, he presents his ideas about systematic courses of "Languages and Humanities." He explains that they are necessary for the sacred ministry, especially for preaching. Using the example of the Jesuits, he writes:

> "Your Reverence, you will concede all of this, but you will say that we still are short of subjects and, therefore, we have to speed up with those we have, so that they can become Priests and work in the vineyard of the Lord; if they have to dedicate themselves to humanities they will be delayed for a year or two. My answer is that it is better to have a well prepared subject two years later than an imperfect one earlier, and this is true, without any doubt, when there is not an imperative need to have him, imperfect as he is. I have no doubt that the Jesuit Fathers are in the same need of subjects as we are, still we see that they follow this way... If we are poor of subjects ready to be good preachers, then the only way to get them is this: do not be anxious, and be patient so that the students might properly study all kind of subjects, useful and necessary for preaching."

This courageous and clear directive will lay the foundation for an explosion of illustrious men, giving origin, in the 1600's, to a great cultural tradition characteristic of our Congregation. The Barnabites will pass to history as scholars, requested to take over a field which will absorb most of their subjects and energies: the education of the youth.

St. Alexander's church in Milan

Many of the people who were attending our church of St. Barnabas were complaining about its locality, set in the countryside outside the walls of the city. St. Charles himself had

suggested another position inside the city to better answer to the apostolic demands coming from the post-Trent church. Among the many, the Fathers accepted, in 1588, the parish church of St. Alexander Martyr in Zebedia, offered by its Rector, Francis del Conte, who wanted to retire. The church was located at the center of the city, and the proposal was fully endorsed by Archbishop Visconti. Since the General Chapter had just taken place, not to miss this golden opportunity, instead of waiting for the next Chapter, Fr. Bascapè decided to ask the opinion of the confreres by letter., and he received an overwhelming positive response. On April 5, 1589, the Barnabites took possession of the church, with Fr. Gabrio Porro as its first Superior. The project to rebuild the church was entrusted to the Barnabite architect, Fr. Lawrence Binago. The foundations were laid by Cardinal Federico Borromeo on March 13, 1602, and the building was completed in 1630, shortly after Fr. Binago's death.

St. Paul alla Colonna in Rome

Fr. Bascapè wanted a larger and better place than St. Blaise. An opportunity came when some small houses in Piazza Colonna were offered to our Fathers. Fr. Cosimo Dossena, Procurator General, was put in charge of the project. The new church dedicated to St. Paul was completed in 1596. But this first church immediately resulted too small for the apostolic activities of the Fathers. Cardinal Aldobrandini was willing, in 1612, to sponsor the enlargement, but a fire, in 1617, destroyed the building. It was rebuilt by the Fathers, but it did not last too long, because in 1659, Alexander VII decided to build a new palace in honor of his Ghigi family, and to give more symmetry to the square, therefore he expropriated any building that was on the way, including our church.

Bishop

When Cardinal Aldobrandini, in 1592, became Pope Clement VIII, the fate of Fr. Bascapè was marked: he was made Bishop of Novara.

Father Cosimo Dossena (1596-1599; 1602-1612)

Fr. AgostinoTornielli was called again to serve as Superior General at the election of Fr. Bascapè as Bishop. Many were the new apostolic openings offered by the needs of the time, but Fr. Tornielli, eager to abide to the new Constitutions restrictions and spirit, had to refuse many offers for such activities. In a special way it had become the desire of the people to entrust their youth to our Fathers for their education. But Fr. Tornielli would not even consider such an option, indeed he even refused the direction of seminaries, and this is why he asked Fr. Timoteo Facciardi to resign from his position as director of the seminary of Arona, entrusted to him by St. Charles. Because of this strict adherence to the Constitutions he even refused the most appealing offer of the direction of the seminary in Venice (1590), and then also in Pisa (1593). Fr. Tornielli had to fight too various attempts by various influential people to make him a Bishop.

During this time the Congregation was extremely enriched by the presence of a young and holy cleric: **Diego Martinez Carrero** from Dos Barrios (Toledo, Spain) (see his biographical notes on November 1).

In 1594 Fr. Dossena, as Procurator General, was entrusted with the opening of a new foundation in Pisa, St. Frediano's church, which had been accepted on condition that it would not be a parish church.

Fr. Tornielli gave also a great impulse to the classical studies in the formation of the Barnabite clerics. In Cremona the director was Fr. Gabuzio. When Cardinal Federico Borromeo paid a visit to Cremona, he was greeted with welcoming speeches by our clerics Julio Cavalcani in Latin, Carlo Bossi in Greek, and Bartolomeo Gavanti in Hebrew.

In the Chapter of 1596, **Fr. Cosimo Dossena** was called to lead the Congregation. He followed Fr. Tornielli's policy of strict observance of discipline and adherence to the Constitutions, with special care for the novices, and been very careful in the selection of local Superiors.

In 1598, Pole Clement VIII was in Bologna for a visit. The Cardinal, Alfonso Paleotto, expressed his desire to have some religious as good workers, to which the pope answered: "Then, call the Barnabites who are true cooperators of the Bishops!" Fr. Dossena accepted the offer and so the Barnabites took over the Bologna Penitentiary with great satisfaction not only of the Cardinal but especially of the people.

The following year, 1599, also Bishop Bascapè in Novara, obtained from Fr. Dossena three Barnabites to help him in the diocese. They established themselves in the church of St. Mark.

From 1599 to 1602, Fr. Asinari was Superior General for a short period as he died in office, his term was completed by Tornielli, and in 1602 Fr. Dossena was reelected to the post.

During this period many are the new foundations: St. Michael in Bologna, Our Lady of Light in San Severino, St. Martin in Asti, and the house in Montù. In Montù a controversy was resolved in our favor through the grace obtained by Fr. Binago's architectural project for Philip II's Escurial Royal Palace.

Meantime Fr. Mazenta, another Barnabite architect, designs the restructuring of the port for the city of Livorno, the cathedral of Bologna (1602), and the new boundaries between Ferrara and Bologna.

There are attempts to obtain from Venice to officially erase the ban, but to no avail.

The great number of new Fathers convinced the Capitular members to ask Fr. Dossena to open new foundations, specifically: Spoleto, Acqui, Lodi, Casalmaggiore, Naples and Genoa.

In Genoa already the father of St. Alexander Sauli, Dominic, had tried in 1564 to have the Barnabites take over the family church of St. Mary's in Carignano but without success. In 1606, through the preaching of Fr. Gavanti the church of St. Paul in Campetto was offered us and accepted. Unfortunately all documents of this community were lost in the 1684 bombing of the city of Genoa.

New apostolic field: education of the youth

Schools were considered an apostolate contrary to and in opposition to the 1579 Constitutions: Fathers involved in this work would not be able to attend the most important business of the day activities: the choir. Although the requests were many and pressing because of the needs of the time, not even the intervention of Clement VIII in 1603 succeeded in convincing them to get involved in this new apostolate: Fr. Cattaneo, Procurator General, had an audience with him to receive the proposal for a foundation in Ragusa (Sicily), but it was refused because of the distance, and because included a school.

If the result was negative, the pressure was on creating a more and more uneasy feelings among our Fathers! The final break happened when in 1603 Monsignor Giambattista Arcimboldi left a bequest for a public school in St. Alexander, where some secular students

had already been admitted. It was in the Chapter of 1605 that the approval was given: Rethoric, Humanities, Secondary, Philosophy and Theology.

Provinces

In 1608 there were 26 houses which were divided in three Provinces: Lombard (the Superior General in charge), Roman (Fr. Innocenzo Chiesa), and Piedmontese (Fr. Lodovico Merlini).

New foundations were added:

a) St. Dalmazzo in Turin offered by Carlo Emmanuele I, but opposed by the Antonians (hospital Friars suppressed in 1777); in 1609 finally they took possession on the birthday of the Duke, "No Congregation has ever entered the city of Turin with such great solemnity and feast..."

b) Mission in the Bearn (Southern France): in 1608, one month after the Chapter, the Pope asked the Barnabites, upon the request by Henry II, to send missionaries to convert the Huguenots.

c) St. Paul and Charles in Vigevano. Here too opposition from local Religious! The Pope had intervene with a Breve in favor of our Fathers. On October 3, 1609, first mass in the chapel.

d) St. Mary in Cosmedin in Naples: in Naples our Fathers instead of been opposed were helped by local Religious, like the Theatines and the Oratorians. September 7, 1609 they took over the church, and upon the canonization of St. Charles, in 1610, the first altar in his honor was erected there.

Barnabite studies and formation

Fr. Dossena was a soldier during the battle of Lepanto (1571), and, therefore, he required from his confreres the spiritual discipline of soldiers. He took great care of the formation of young Barnabites, outlined in eleven points:

1. The Rule is the remedy for all failings;
2. Be attached to the Rule as the will of God and as made by man;
3. he reminds them that Obedience "transforms the little things into great;"
4. the "tower of spiritual perfection" cannot be based on personal will or opinion, but on holy mortification;
5. He recalls the saying of Saint Gregory: "It is much less to renounce what we possess than what we are," therefore, he recommends the novices to prefer and ask for "base and heavy jobs;"
6. "Be lovers of silence, which is the source and keeper of devotion;"
7. "With trust and sincerity they should open their heart to the Father;"
8. It is of the most importance to "think often of the purpose of the novitiate, which is to learn how to control themselves according to the religious virtues, for their whole lives."
9. He reminds them that work is an "indispensable companion" of virtue, especially at the beginning: therefore, if one wants virtue, he must be willing to work too.
10. "Any job or work will be easy for the person who will have a great love for Christ, because it is true that the one who loves a lot, suffers a lot."
11. His conclusion is: "Frequent Meditation on the Passion of Christ is a great means to inflame the heart with love toward him." "Let us remember... that we are religious to serve God, to save our souls, and to be useful to our neighbors as

much as possible. It is toward this end that everyone has to direct his actions, make use of all his time, without giving in to fatigue, knowing that the fatigue is short but the reward is eternal."

To confirm these directives, Fr. Gavanti, who wrote his life, reminds us of Fr. Dossena's four points in his program at the service of the Congregation:

1. Good formation of the novices;
2. better education of the students;
3. excellent election of the *officials*;
4. frequent visits to the houses, well done and with special affection for regular observance.

The 1600 and the Clerics Regular

Decadence of the society at large influenced by the Spanish domination: court life, with complicated etiquette, arts used to glorify the great and nobles in the most bizarre and ridiculous forms; industries are despised, etc. They are not after what is beautiful and true, but what is new and at any cost going even against common sense.

What happened to the Religious? Segregated from the "world," the Religious are able to dedicate themselves to literature and sciences, without compromising the apostolic activities, reserved for the diocesan clergy. The segregation renders them free to follow their own individual genius, while the use of daily meditation makes them careful and able to avoid any defect or bad tendencies characterizing the society of the time. During the 17th century we witness a true competition among Orders of Clerics Regular, by now well established, in the field of studies, enriching with new grace their priestly ministry. The Barnabites were among the competitors!

State of the Congregation

At the 1611 General Chapter there were 40 capitulars representing the 180 members of the Order. Fr. Merlini and Fr. Chiesa participated for the first time as Provincial Superiors for their respective new established Provinces. In this Chapter the lay-brothers asked the privilege to wear the square biretta and the be called "Brothers," both requests were denied as they seemed to want to look like the Fathers. Fr. Dossena was confirmed as Superior General.

The spread of the new Orders had created an imbalance between the diocesan and the religious clergy, therefore Paul V seemed ready to issue a directive asking the list of members of each religious house with the intend of blocking a reduction in number, limiting in this way the opening of new foundations. Fearing the consequences, many Religious Orders applied for an exemption, including our Fr. Dossena. In the letter he wrote to the Procurator General instructing him about the petition, he gives us a state of the Congregation at that time. Here some of the reasons he gives for the petition: "First, as the Congregation is growing and there are opportunities to open new houses, like the four or five opened in the last three years, if in the other houses there must be the required number of subjects, then we will not be able to accept new ones, blocking the increase of the Congregation and therefore the service of God and of the souls of our neighbor... Fourth, often places are offered with income, like one now for ten people, and in France there was an income for two houses; when the Lord sends these opportunities, if we do not have subjects ready, we cannot accept them, since religious subjects cannot be created like the soldiers made in one month at the roll of the drum, they have to study eight or nine years and must exercise themselves in the

observance of the rules and in the religious virtues before they can be exposed to work for their neighbor...” Eventually the Pope changed his mind and did not publish the instruction.

St. Charles ai Catinari in Rome

Already in 1575, Frs. Degli Alessi and Boerio had been trying to find a suitable place in Rome, finally they settled for St. Blaise all’Anello, small but very central, behind St. Andrew della Valle. The place did not respond to the needs for a formation house, so they started to look around for another place. It was the Countess Claudia Rangoni to donate them a rich heredity for that purpose, but where to build? With the help of St. Philip Neri they decided to buy some houses in Piazza Colonna to build the church and house of St. Paul, as we have seen above.

On January 18, 1611, having reached an agreement with the Theatines, who were planning to build in the same area, the Fathers, having purchased some of the houses around St. Blaise, decided to build a new church in honor of St. Charles who had just been canonized on November 4, 1610. The building was started on September 29, 1611. For the design Fr. Binago and Fr. Mazenta presented their designs, but the Superior, Fr. Pallamolla, selected the design by Rosato Rosati.

Bishop Dossena

At the ceremony for the laying of the cornerstone among the many dignitary there was also Bishop Dossena, who had been elected Bishop of Tortona on August 27, 1611. Paul V threatened him with the vow of obedience if he was not going to accept the nomination, and when he finally saw him dressed as a Bishop, he gave him his own rochet, embraced him, and whispered in his ears: “I have never been so happy in making a Bishop!”

Father Ambrose Mazenta (1565-Dec. 23, 1635) (1612-1617)

On May 8, 1612, the General Chapter was convened to elect the new Superior General: Fr. Ambrose Mazenta.

Since the Chapter was on, a proposal was made to add a forth Province. We are not sure why the proposal, but one reason must have been to reduce the number of the Capitulars: at the moment, over 180 vocales, 40 were sent to the Chapter. With four Provinces, the Constitutions envisioned a reduced number of members since only the Provincial Superiors and two representatives would go, instead of every local Superior and representatives. The opinions were many, and so the matter was postponed to the next Chapter.

Expansion and new foundations

While working for maximum efficiency in the internal structures of the Congregation, Fr. Bascape’ and Fr. Dossena enlarged the boundaries of the Order, so that, as envisioned in the Constitutions, in 1608, the Order was divided into Provinces: Lombard, Piedmontese, and Roman. In 1593 a second novitiate was opened in Zagarolo (Rome), besides the one already in existence in Monza. Three years later the first house was opened in Rome, Saint Paul alla Colonna, which will be called by our Fathers “*Totius Congregationis nostrae columna et firmamentum*” (column and foundation of our whole Congregation). Fr. Mazenta continued

the expansion of the Congregation, indeed it will be under his leadership that the Congregation established itself in Savoy, as a prelude to the expansion into France, with the help of St. Francis de Sales (see chapter 12).

The many offers for new foundations were coming from Bishops, from local clergy, and from influential lay people, usually because of the positive and often enthusiastic response to the Fathers' apostolic activities especially as most effective preachers.

Usually those who were presenting the request for their presence would offer a church and a dwelling with the necessary benefits of one kind or another for the necessary sustenance of the Religious. Before the Fathers decided to accept schools, when a school was attached to the request, it would cause their refusal as unconstitutional. Usually the Fathers would prefer a non-parochial church to be free and independent for the demands of their community life. Occasionally, other Religious already established in the area would oppose the proposal either out of, let us say, jealousy, or because too many Religious in that area would interfere with each other; in some other occasions the opposition would be caused by political reasons between various factions of the local laity. For example in Vigevano (1620-23), the new Spanish Bishop, instigated by those who were not in favor of the Barnabite foundation, reached the point of excommunicating the Fathers, forbidding them to preach and to confess women, unless the confessor were at least 40 years old, accusing them to be apostates, etc. If Cardinal Borromeo was able to revoke some of these dispositions, it will be only the direct intervention by the Vatican to force the Bishop to revoke all the edicts against the Barnabites and leave them in peace in their ministry.

Among the many new foundations, we want to remember the one of St. Charles alle Mortelle in Naples, where eventually St. Francis Xavier M. Bianchi will be the Superior more than a century later.

Attempts to develop in France

Besides the Barnabite presence in the Bearn (Southern France), which was strictly a mission for the conversion of the Huguenots, Fr. Mazenta felt the need to expand in France, starting with Paris.

In 1611, the Queen Maria dei Medici (wife of Henry IV), granted to the Barnabites a license to open houses in any corner of the Kingdom. Excellent proposals came from Toulouse and from Lyons. In 1614, everything seemed to be ready for the opening in Lyons, but what actually happened we do not know, as the project did not go through.

Later, the death of Henry IV, the spread of Gallicanism, and the unstable political situation will constantly frustrate the attempts.

It will be in 1629 that finally, through the efforts of Fr. Justin Guerin, the Barnabites received the permission to open a house in Paris, St. James area, with Fr. Maurice Marin. Two years later, in 1631, the church and house of St. Eligius will be entrusted to them.

Another merge!

The Congregation of Christian Doctrine had been founded by the Venerable Caesar de Bus (+ April 15, 1607). Because it had expanded too fast, Fr. Vigier, successor of De Bus, wanted to consolidate, therefore he approached the Barnabites for a possible merge. After a meeting in Avignone with Frs. Bellarini and Gennari, Fr. Vigier went to St. Barnabas to discuss the proposal, and he himself decided against it not happy with the conditions. Eventually he will merge with the Somachans, but to separate again in 1647.

Instead a happy merge took place in Pescia, in 1623, with **the Congregation of the Annunciation**, founded by Father **Anthony Pagni**, a devout parish priest, and a most dedicated and holy layman, the doctor **Paul Ricordati**. Under the direction of St. John Leonardi, Ricordati became a priest, and then with Pagni decided to lead life in common. Soon their dwelling became too small for the crowd of people attracted by their holiness, and so Bishop Andrew Turini let them build a church for their apostolic ministry, which was blessed on March 25, 1600, under the title of Our Lady of the Annunciation. Soon many asked to join them and the Congregation experienced a fast growth. Fr. Pagni prepared a rule, always under the spiritual guidance of St. John Leonardi, and eventually asked Rome for the official approval or to join another Congregation. A happy meet took place in 1615, when Fr. Pomponio Tartaglia, while preaching in Pisa, went to Pescia for a visit. He wrote: "Three of those good priests... after long prayers to the Father of enlightenment to inspire them what to do... they wrote on pieces of paper the names of various Congregations, put them in their hat, invoked again the Holy Spirit to show them to which Institute they should join, and all three at the same time came up with the name of the Barnabites. The real marvel is that they did it three times, and for three times the name of the Barnabites came up." And so the following year they made the petition through Fr. Tartaglia. It will be the General Chapter of 1623 to finalize the agreement, having overcome some difference of opinions and conditions. The agreement received its official Bull of approval from Urban VIII, on June 24, 1624.

Just to mention it, another Congregation, the Priests of the Good Jesus in Ravenna, tried to merge with the Barnabites, but it did not materialize.

Fr. Mazenta is remembered especially for the famous **controversy about Fr. Morigia's primacy in the foundation of the Order**. The General Chapter of 1620 affirmed that the Founders were three and that among them Anthony M. Zaccaria had a primary role, even if Fr. Morigia was the first Superior General (1536).

Fr. Mazenta was a scholar and therefore he put great effort in the development of the studies in the curriculum of the Congregation. He himself could be considered the first, most illustrious, and best known in a series of Barnabites who, in the 1600's, gave to the Congregation the fame as a forge of scholars.

Other Developments

St. Michael in Vienna and St. Benedict in Prague

Ferdinand II was looking for a Congregation to counterbalance the Protestant movement, which had spread wide in the Empire. The Secretary of the Propagation of the Faith proposed the Barnabites. The New Superior General, Fr. Julius Cavalcani, sent, on August 7, 1625, Fr. Florio Cremona as confessor and Fr. Venusto Venusti as a preacher. They reached Vienna on October 11. On January 14, 1626, Fr. Cremona wrote: "I have used a church of St. Michael, a parish church of the Emperor, attached to the grand Court, with five naves...," but German speaking religious were needed! Fr. Cremona resorted to a Capuchin and another priest to help, meantime Fr. Mansueto Merati had joined them and had become a well appreciated preacher. It was on May 4, 1626, that the Emperor officially entrusted to the Barnabites the church of St. Michael. As a sign of appreciation the Emperor was affiliated to the Order.

Cardinal d'Arrach, meantime, was pressuring Fr. Cremona to open a foundation also in Prague. When finally some German speaking newly ordained became available, Fr. Cavalcani gave him the permission to go to Prague, accompanied by the young Fr. Juliano

Dommers. On October 11, 1627, he celebrated the Mass in the Imperial chapel, at the presence of the Emperor and the Empress. Right after, the Vicar of the archbishop accompanied them to the parish church of St. Benedict, located at the center of the city, and officially entrusted it to them.

Barnabite Oblates

For some time men of piety and virtue had been associated with the Congregation as Oblates, since they could not profess the vows as Religious due to their age or other reasons. In 1617, they received specific guidelines, and in 1626 it was established to assign them a spiritual director, to have a habit, and to have the privilege to wear the surplice while serving Mass.

We have no information about the *third order for women,* but probably they developed only at the local level in some of the communities, like in Pavia.

The Milan pestilence of 1630

In 1630 a terrible pestilence infuriated in the city of Milan and surroundings.

Because of the pestilence the General Chapter, a very short one, May 4-8, took place in Pavia, limiting itself to the election of the Superior General, Fr. Cavalcani again, following the sudden death of Fr. Torriani on January 22, 1630.

The first Barnabite to die was Fr. Thomas Ricci, on April 17, in St. Alexander. At the beginning of the pestilence, Fr. Ricci, Fr. Gorno and Fr. Mignatta had offered to Cardinal Borromeo their service for the victims, but because there were plenty of diocesan clergy, and because they did not believe yet in the seriousness of the situation, their offer was refused.

Fr. Cavalcani, instead, aware of the drastic situation, sent a letter to all the confreres asking for prayers, and specifically he ordered:

1) to hold a penitential procession every Saturday;
2) to offer a daily Mass for the victims;
3) to fast on Wednesday;
4) in every community three Religious should take turn in scourging themselves;
5) to give donations for those in need;
6) to keep all sacred vessels safely enclosed in one place.

Finally he was recommending them to show the courage befitting the followers of Christ and, therefore, to be ready to give their life for sake of theirs brothers. As a consequence 16 Barnabites died in St. Alexander, 6 in Pavia, 15 in St. Barnabas, 24 in Cremona, other communities experienced less fatalities but the one in Pescia was practically whipped out.

The pestilence did not stop in Milan, but reached, although in less proportions, other regions, like Piedmont, Tuscany and Emilia. In Livorno the Barnabites were in charge of all the *Lazaretti*, in Bologna the Cardinal asked for two Fathers, but the whole community made itself available.

One sour note was the strange reaction of Cardinal Borromeo against the community of St. Alexander: instigated, probably, by malicious voices, he accused the Fathers of not caring for the victims! By then 13 members had died, and when the parish priest himself, Fr. Banfi, died, the Cardinal refused to appoint a new one, instead he put the parish of St. Alexander under the care of the adjacent one, St. Fermo. In vain all the protests... Finally the Fathers had to appeal to the Sacred Congregation in Rome, which, on October 25, decided in favor of the Fathers.

On February 2, 1631, Fr. Cavalcani himself became a victim of the pestilence.

Fr. Mazenta, senior Assistant General, took over again the command of the Congregation. He had to face a great worry: since the clergy had been decimated, Rome decided that no Congregation could accept new novices without the explicit permission of the Holy See, to allow the diocesan seminaries to refurbish the dioceses. The flourishing novitiate in Monza became almost empty. To go around the problem, Fr. Mazenta tried, without success, to open a novitiate in Vienna or Prague. He tried the same in France: for six months, because of the pestilence, there had been no communication with any of those communities, he was not even aware that the Provincial Superior, Fr. Colom, had died.

Various

a) Fr. Cremona in Prague

Fr. Cremona had been very instrumental for the foundations in Vienna and in Prague, and was keeping asking the Superior General to open other houses, having many high level contacts at the Imperial Court and with the Cardinal. He was very much an independent personality and was easily avoiding those in authority, creating often very uncomfortable situations for them. In 1625, he was assigned to Prague, although at first the Emperor had opposed the move. Finally the Superiors to avoid these kinds of confrontations thought to call him back to Italy. But meantime, his tremendous and successful apostolic activities in Prague had caused Cardinal d'Arrach to obtain, in 1632, from the Propagation of the Faith that no one could be transferred without his consultation, including Fr. Florio. Moreover, the brother in law of the Cardinal, the Duke of Friedland, made him wear a diocesan cassock because the Barnabite habit was too similar to the one of the Jesuits, whom he abhorred, made him dwell in a private house, so that he could be at his personal disposal...at a certain point Fr. Cremona, then, asked to join another local Congregation!

Fr. General Crivelli, on his visit to Vienna and Prague, was able to resolve the case of Fr. Florio, but not of Fr. Cremona, who kept following the Duke, until he was murdered, then he joined the Canons of the Holy Sepulcher.

This kind of experiences will determine the future Superior Generals to take a strong stand encouraging the confreres to avoid these kind of relationships (some time instigated by some individuals!), and reprimanding those involved. But this did not stop them from granting permission for worthwhile proposals, like the one of Fr. Gallicio in Malta.

b) 1635 General Chapter

The Congregation registered 343 priests, 115 professed students, and 175 Brothers, for a total of 633. Once again the idea of a 4th Province is discussed but not approved. Another proposal was to extend the term of the Superior General from three to six years, but it did not pass, indeed in 1638 there will be a proposal for a life-term! Fr. Crivelli was reelected Superior General.

c) Controversy in Naples

In 1634 the Barnabites had been called to run the local Penitentiary. Perhaps Cardinal Boncompagni had not consulted with the Canons of the Cathedral, so they appealed the decision to Rome. The Sacred Rota decided in favor of the Barnabites, but in 1641 the Cardinal got sick. Causing the Canons to try again, and indeed at the death of the Cardinal on December 21, they ordered the Barnabites out. The new Archbishop Filomarino, sided with

the Canons, and asked the Pope to rescind the Sacred Rota decision. But the Pope was in favor of the Barnabites, until the Archbishop forbid the Fathers from hearing Confession, then the Pope gave in! The Barnabites kept a very humble attitude in the controversy and indeed they will enjoy a friendly relationship with the Archbishop.

Another controversy always in Naples, was the prohibition by the Canons to use the rochet! On July 12, 1638, the Sacred Congregation of Rites ordered that the rochet will be used by those who had the privilege: exactly the point of our confreres!

d) Savoy is prospering

"We are pleased to hear that the observance is very much in vigor, the schools in good reputation for the diligence of the teachers, and the attendance by the students; the church is well frequented; the house has no debts; the Superior is loved by the subjects..." (Fr. General's letter to the Superior Provincial, Fr. Gallicio).

On April 19, 1642, James Philip Cocastel made a will in favor of the Barnabites of Thonon, which led to open a house in 1661 in Bonneville, which in 1670 became the novitiate.

e) General Chapters 1644-1659

A sincere discussion between the two factions, one wanting the Fathers to concentrate themselves to religious ministry only, the other wanting to open the Congregation to full ministry for the youth.

Missions to Switzerland and Greece, offered by the Propagation of the Faith, are accepted.

Fr. Cassetta sent a letter to the Chapter complaining that the frequent Chapters (every three years) was keeping the Superiors away from their community too long, therefore create a 4th Province to limit the number of Capitulars, and extend the Superior General's term to six years, also reduce and concentrate forces in fewer houses.

Watches are not allowed!

In matter of discipline everyone complains about the interference by politicians or Cardinals or Bishops: often special permits are granted by the Holy See... which is not good for the Religious, who were the recipient, and for the others who were tempted to gain such privileges! The problem then how to keep peace and at the same time good public relations! A headache for the Superiors.

In 1647, the title "Brother" is approved.

The baroque mentality was influencing the life of some religious, so the General Chapter of 1653 issued guidelines against "ways of dressing and make up" like "long hair, excessive beards, earrings, fancy shoes, etc."

In 1655, the church of St. Bartholomew of the Armens in Genoa, the shrine of the Holy Face of Jesus, was without priests, as the Basilians died out. After a long controversy among the city authorities, finally it was entrusted to the Barnabites.

In 1658, Fr. Gallicio, Provincial Superior of Piedmont-Savoy-France, found out that Spain was not going to allow French and Savoiard members to participate in the General Chapter. A petition was sent to Rome to have the Chapter in Bologna or Genoa. When the Pope found out that the Capitulars were over 60, he made pressure to reduce the number: too expensive, and too many absent from their place of work! Fr. Gallicio then begged the Pope to issue a Breve to the Congregation to overcome the oppositions to these changes. As a

consequence the General Chapter of 1659 finally approved the 4th Province: Tuscany, changing in this way the make up of the General Chapter.

f) Small Communities and Congregations!

On December 1649 the Holy See required a list of all houses and communities with the financial report, and meantime new novices could not be accepted, and the profession of the vows could not be made. The purpose was to eliminate small communities, which were experiencing financial problems and/or personal problems, and so eliminate these problems, which were making Religious observance very difficult. To go around the ruling about the novices, Fr. Falconio tried to send to Vienna the Italian postulants, but that too was forbidden in 1650. Instead he was able to safeguard some communities reinforcing their membership with more confreres. The Bull "*Instaurandae disciplinae*" was published on October 15, 1652, and our houses of Tortona, Pieve, Orta and Acqui had to be closed, so only few places.

Another proposal was to reduce the number of Congregations, so the Barnabites were asked to merge with the Theatines and the Somaschans! Our Procurator General, Fr. Facciardi, was very capable and clever to avoid this merge.

Rome, seat of the General Curia

During this period the Congregation had grown from about ten houses to more than forty (1662). In 1659 the Tuscan Province was added; the German houses (started in 1625) were united to the Lombard Province, and the French ones to Piedmont.

A perfect balance in the organization was reached in 1662, when the General Curia was moved to Rome.

The idea had already been proposed and accepted in the Chapters of 1623 and 1626. But when the third Chapter of 1629 was supposed to give the final positive vote, the dissension among the members was such that they almost tabled the whole question, but only for a short while, because the Pope himself pushed the idea against the position of the Lombard Province members. They had their reasons: it meant to transfer the center of the whole Congregation from what had been the "stomach and lung of the Congregation."

The opposition was organized in Milan, supported too by some politicians, but to no avail, and the Breve was sent to the Congregation on April 18, 1662.

In the same year the General Chapter was held in Rome, and a Lombard, Fr. Andrew Cuttica, was elected Superior General. This brought some peace. Meantime St. Barnabas became the see of the Provincial Superior.

This change is a decisive factor in the history of the Congregation. The Order inserted itself with full right in the life of the Church. It is not a question of physical closeness, but direct participation in the problem effecting the Church: opposition to the diffusion of heresies, missions to the pagans, fight against Illuminism and Regalism, pastoral care of the people, renewal of the cult, and a deepening of the devotion to the humanity of Jesus.

We will see Barnabites at work in each one of these fields, writing some of the most beautiful pages of Church history in the 1800's.

The three directions of the apostolate:
- schools, - penitentiaries, - missions to heretics.

The three directions taken by the Barnabites in their apostolic activities in the 1600's were:

a) opening of their schools to the laity;

b) acceptance of Penitentiaries in Bologna, Livorno, and Naples:

- in Bologna they were invited, in 1599, by Cardinal Gabriele Paleotto, and became well-known and sought spiritual directors;
- in Livorno, already well known as able preachers, in 1629, they were entrusted with the Penitentiary by Archbishop Giuliano dei Medici;
- in Naples their fame as good confessors gained them the position in the Penitentiary of the Cathedral, and as spiritual directors in many convents, having being invited in 1634 by Cardinal Boncompagni;
  (in this pastoral expansion we can see the actualization of Father Magenta's formation program).

c) the third area of their apostolate was preaching in lands infested by the Protestant Reformation.

Today with the ecumenical movement in full bloom, it seems awkward to talk about this type of mission, but we have to take into consideration the times and also the charity and gentleness used by our Fathers in their fight for the truth. Our Fathers developed their mission in four areas: Valtellina, Bearn, Silesia, and Switzerland.

Fr. Dominic Boerio was asked by the Most Reverend Francis Bonomy, Bishop of Vercelli and extraordinary Nuncio of Pope Gregory XIII, to go in the city of Cologne, whose pastor, Fr. Gherard Truches, had become a Protestant. In his history, Fr. Gabuzio tells us that for two years (1581-1582), Fr. Boerio gave himself totally to that mission.

St. Charles Borromeo asked for him for a special mission in Valtellina. Fr. Boerio went there in 1583, but the persecution was so violent that he had to abandon that mission, only to move to Germany. He is remembered as "Vallis Tellinae Apostolus."

In the Bearn, in Southern France, the conditions were not less dramatic with the presence of the Calvinists. Pope Paul V selected Father Fortunato Colon and two other Fathers to carry on the fight. Father Colon was a converted Hugonot, therefore, the most qualified person for such a mission. They reached their destination in March, 1608. Lescar and Oleron were the first two centers of the mission. One member of the Community was Brother Ludovico Bitoz, who today is considered a Saint; he died while the fight was at its worst, between 1615 and 1617: "Oh, could we die for Christ! If martyrdom could unite us in the way Obedience has united us, then your name of Fortunato (=lucky) would be most appropriate," he had said to Father Colon.

The 1624 report by the bishop of Lescar is very positive: it gives credit to the Barnabites for working zealously for the conversion of souls to the Catholic faith, and for refuting the heresies in writing and public debates.

The third mission was in Selesia, centered in Prague, were the Barnabites opened a house in 1627. Fr. Ferdinand Hauch and Fr. Pius Cassetta were the two missionaries.

In 1645 Pope Innocent X called the Barnabites into Switzerland. Fr. Virgilio Batocletti and Fr. Ludovico Tremouille were the lucky ones chosen for the mission. They concentrated their efforts in Constance and in Basel. The situation there was not too bad, and the Fathers concentrated on a prevention program. The foundation in Savoy, like in Thonon, was used to

influence the neighboring regions which were controlled by the opposition. Among the Fathers involved there was also the nephew of St. Francis de Sales, Joseph, and Fr. Recrosio, who will become bishop of Nice.

We can truly say then that the heart of the Congregation was pulsating along side with the heart of the Church.

THE GALLICAN CHURCH

The ***Gallican Church*** was the Catholic Church in France from the time of the Declaration of the Clergy of France (1682) to that of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy (1790) during the French Revolution.

Gallicanism was the doctrine that the power of monarchs is independent of the power of popes, and that the church of each country should be under the joint control of the pope and the monarch. The opposite doctrine is known as Ultramontanism.

Under the Declaration of the Clergy of France of 1682, the following privileges were claimed, but never accepted by the Holy See:

- Kings of France had the right to assemble church councils in their dominions.
- Kings of France had the right to make laws and regulations touching ecclesiastical matters.
- The pope required the king's consent to send papal legates into France.
- Those legates required the king's consent to exercise their power within France.
- Bishops, even when commanded by the pope, could not go out of the kingdom without the king's consent.
- Royal officers could not be excommunicated for any act performed in the discharge of their official duties.
- The pope could not authorize the alienation of landed church estates in France, or the diminishing of any foundation.
- Papal bulls and letters required the *pareatis* of the king or his officers before they took effect within France.
- The pope could not issue dispensations "to the prejudice of the laudable customs and statutes" of the French cathedral churches.
- It was lawful to appeal from the Pope to a future council or to have recourse to the "appeal as from an abuse" (*appel comme d'abus*) against acts of the ecclesiastical power.